

# 1911 Encyclopædia Britannica, Volume 24 — Schaffhausen (canton)

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**SCHAFFHAUSEN** (Fr. *Schaffhouse*) , the most northerly of the Swiss cantons, and the only one wholly (excepting the small hamlet of Burg, a suburb of Stein) north of the Rhine. It is divided into three detached portions by the grand-duchy of Baden, which surrounds it on all sides save that of the Rhine, which separates it from the cantons of Thurgau and of Zurich: by far the largest part is the region near the chief town, Schaffhausen, while to the south is the small isolated district of Rüdlingen and Buchberg (purchased in 1520), and to the east the more extensive tract around the old town of Stein on the Rhine (ceded by Zurich in 1798). Within the territory of Schaffhausen are two "enclaves," belonging politically to Baden—the village of Büsingen (just east of the chief town) and the farm of Verenhof, near Büttenhardt. The total area of the canton is 113.5 sq. m., of which 108.4 sq. m. are classed as "productive" (forests covering 46 sq. m., and vineyards 4 sq. m.). The main portion of the canton consists of the gently inclined plateau of the Randen (its highest point, c. 3000 ft., is at its north edge) that slopes towards the Rhine, and is intersected by several short glens, separated by rounded ridges. The most important of these glens is that of the Klettgau, to the west of the chief town. There are only intermittent torrents in the canton, apart from the broad stream of the Rhine, which, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. below the town, forms the celebrated Falls of the Rhine (first mentioned about 1122), which are rather rapids (only 60 ft. in height)

than a cascade proper, though the mass of water is very great.

The direct railway line from Constance to Basel, along the right and (generally) non-Swiss bank of the Rhine, passes through the canton for some 16 m., while there is a branch line (entirely within the canton) from Schaffhausen to Schleithem ( $10\frac{1}{2}$  m.), and two lines join the chief town with the Swiss territory to the south, Zürich being thus 29 m. or  $35\frac{1}{2}$  m. distant. In 1900 the population was 41,454, of whom 40,290 were German-speaking, while 34,046 were Protestants, 7403 Romanists and 22 Jews. The inhabitants are devoted chiefly to agriculture (particularly fodder stuffs and fruits) and to wine-growing (Hallauer is the best-known red wine). There are tile factories in the Reiath region (N.E. of the capital). The canton is divided into six administrative districts, which comprise thirty-six communes. The cantonal constitution dates in its main features from 1876. The legislature or *Grossrat* is composed of members elected for four years in the proportion of one to every 500 (or fraction over 250) of the population, but only communes with more than 250 inhabitants form separate electoral circles, the smaller being united for electoral purposes with their greater neighbours. The executive or *Regierungsrat* of five members is also elected for four years by a popular vote, as are the two members of the Federal *Ständerat* and of the Federal *Nationalrat*. One thousand citizens have the right of " initiative " as to legislative projects and important

financial matters as well as to the revision of the cantonal constitution. Since 1895 the " obligatory referendum " for all legislative projects has prevailed, as well as a curious institution (formerly existing in several cantons) by which the legislature can consult the people on certain questions involving principles and not merely on fully drafted legislative projects. The taxes are very small, while the property of the canton is the most considerable in Switzerland, so that from a financial point of view Schaffhausen is the most favoured in the country, and till recently it had no public debt at all. The numerous forests are well managed and bring in much money.

The canton arose from acquisitions made at various dates from 1461 to 1798 by the town, which at the time of the Reformation obtained possession of the outlying estates of the ecclesiastical foundations then suppressed. The most interesting spot in the canton is the little town of Stein, with its Benedictine monastery (1005–1526), now a sort of medieval museum, and the castle of Hohenklingen towering above it. [\(W. A. B. C.\)](#)



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